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AN
ANSWER
TO THE
Unitarians Objections, &c.

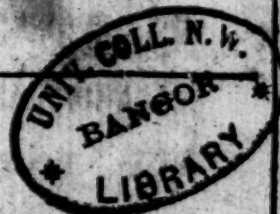
AN
ANSWER
TO THE

Unitarian's Objections, &c.

AN *O. Roberts*
ANSWER
TO THE
Unitarians Objections
FROM
REASON,
Against the
DOCTRINE
OF THE
Holy Trinity.

LONDON:

Printed for R. Burrough, at the Sun and Moon in Corn-
hill; and are to be Sold at the Publishing-Office in
Bear-binder-Lane, near Stocks-Market. 1707.



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To the Reader.

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THE Learned Author of this
Treatise against the Unitarians
would have published it himself, if he
had not been prevented by Death. For
being engaged in that Controversie, he
had designed it to stop the Mouth of those
Gentlemen who speak always of Reason,
as if it was on their Side, against the Do-
ctrine of the H. Trinity. That Contro-
versie having been asleep for some Years,
and being revived again by some Gen-
tlemen, who say nothing more than
what was brought upon the Stage by
their Late Authors, a near Relation to
the Author of this Treatise, who had
opposed the Unitarians when alive, has
thought fit to bring it to the Press, and
to oppose it to the new Endeavours of
those

To the Reader,

those who in several Pamphlets which they have lately Published have said nothing but what this Learned Author has confuted in this Treatise, the Considerations which he refutes were Printed in the Year 1694, and attacked several Men of the Greatest Name, who have not neglected to vindicate their Explanations of that Mystery. The Task which our Author undertook was to prove that Reason had nothing contrary to that Doctrine, as it is received in the Christian Church, and in the Church of England. He has done that so effectually, that he hath shewn clearly that the Unitarians build all their Reasonings upon the Materiality of the Soul, which great Error overturning the Principles of all Religion, they did not think then fit to profess openly, but which Now-a-days they acknowledge without any Shame; so that nothing can be more Seasonable than the Edition of such a Work against them.

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For being all Christians, by Christ's Appointment are
to be baptized into the Name of One Name, and Three
Names, we consider this One Name is no other than
that Name which is above every Name, and that is as

ANSWER

TO THE Unitarians Objections, &c.

IT is agreed amongst Learned Men, that of all the
most Ancient Forms used in Christian Baptism,
even from the Apostles Time, (for which the
Apostles Creed came afterwards to be used) was
this, *Credo in Deum, Patrem, Filium, & Spiritum San-*
ctum, or Πιστω εις τ̃ Θεον, τ̃ Πατέρα, τ̃ υιον, & τ̃ ἁγιον
Πνευμα; *I believe in God, the Father, the Son, and*
the Holy Ghost; this most antiently received Stipula-
tion in Baptism in its full Sense the *Socinians* now re-
ject with Contempt, but without any Necessity, and
upon no Authority, beside that of the Strength of their
own Wit; but we can by no Means yeild to their Im-
portunity, and admit their novel and forced Interpre-
tation, because both the obvious Meaning of our Sa-
viour's Words, and the Scripture Exposition, and the
Faith of the main Body of Christians through all Ages
are against it, and the Reasons they have hitherto of-
fered for it upon our most strict Scrutiny appear insuffi-
cient.

Matth. 28.

19.

For being all Christians, by Christ's Appointment are to be Baptized into the Belief of One Name, and Three named, we consider this One Name is no other than that Name which is above every Name, and that is as much as to say, the Supream Majesty of the Universe; and because that only is God Almighty, we understand our Saviour commands all Nations to be Baptized into the Faith and Service of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and when we observe of the Three named, the First and the Third have evidently no other than a Divine Nature, we cannot apprehend, without great Force, how One that hath no Divine Nature (in a Covenant of Life and Peace) can be betwixt them, as the *Socinians* say here.

1 Joh. 5.

7.

ly in that Text, *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*. For though we do confess these Words of St. John are omitted in sundry Copies, yet finding them read in *Tertullian* and St. *Cyprian*, we cannot reasonably doubt of their Genuineness, until the *Socinians* (beside conjectural Negatives) produce some positive Proof of their Rejection of greater Antiquity and Authority, which can never be done.

We are also confirmed in this Sense of our Baptismal Stipulation by the Scriptures, which we find do teach there is but One God, and yet speak always of these Three named, as really diverse Persons each from the other, and ascribe to every One of them Titles and Characteristics peculiar to the Supream Deity in the usual and undistorted Acception of the Words, and that in such great Variety and Multiplicity of Expressions to the same Purpose, as could not have happened by chance, nor at all, unless this had been the intended Sense of them; so that the Form of Christian Baptism interpreted by the Apostles and Evangelists, with-

out

out any Force put upon them, teaches us an Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity to be worshipped. Nor could this Faith then give any Offence, in being consonant to the received and most approved Institutions of that Age; for the Trinity of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, whose Sentiments about Immaterial Substances were then most relied upon, was either the same with this, (as some say) or else very like it; as all confess; and the Learned *Jews* did then much symbolize in their Notions with them: But the great Stumbling-block was, that Jesus Crucified should be thought One of the Three which here truly bear the Name of Almighty God; this was altogether strange to them, and was indeed the great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh.

And therefore there was none of the most Antient Heresies but was framed and contrived to elude this Point, which they did either by denying Jesus to be the Son of the Father here, (i. e. the Son of God,) or to be really a Man; or affirming Christ to be of the Divine Nature, and Jesus of Humane, &c. but I account the rest to be but the Ravings of Crack-brain'd Men. Nor do I find any one who did believe Jesus was the Son of Man, so as to be himself Man, and that he was the Son of God too, but he did also believe that Jesus was the Son of God, as to be himself God, until *Theodotus Byzantius* having first denied Christ, and renounced his Religion in Persecution, did afterwards blaspheme Christ, as *Tertullian* speaks, denying him to be God, which was about the Year 190. Perhaps he might be an Unitarian, but none could be so before, if an Unitarian be one that believes Jesus Christ of Nazareth to be really a Man, and the Son of God,

though B. God to hold though
son, for he was, of all that confessed Christ to be the Son of God, the first that said he was no more than a Man, for *Gerinthus*, *Ebion*, and others before, had said he was a meer Man, (but then they said he was only the Son of Joseph and Mary; The *Minoges Ebionaei* were later.

*Tert. Prae-
cont. Hae-
ret.*

• Whom
Eusebius calls
lib. 5. c. 28.
† ἀρχι-
γόν κ' Πα-
τέρα τῆς
νοουμένης
ἐκείνης
πρωτον ἐκ
πάντα ἱε-
ρὸν ἀνθρώ-
πον τὸν Χρι-
στον

1 Joh. 5. tho' not himself God. For neither *Simeon*, or *Menas-*
 5, 10, 13, *der*, *Carpocrates*, *Cerinthus*, *Ebion*, or any of the Ancient
 20. Hereticks, did believe thus. And therefore these were
 1 Joh. 2. not *Antitrinitarians*, but all *Antichristians*, as St. *John*
 18, 22. calls them, and says he writ his Gospel to confirm
 2 Joh. 4. us in the contrary Doctrine. If the *Socinians* do
 3, 13. mean such as these are *Unitarians*, let them deal
 2 Joh. 7. apertly with us, and confess that the most Ancient
 Joh. 20, 31. *Unitarians* were *Antichristians* upon Scripture Re-
 cord, and we will say no more against *Unitarianism*.
 But if they will not do this, let them name us One
Unitarian before in the World. We see the Apo-
 stolical Exposition of the Christian Baptism in the
 Creed is directly levelled against the former Here-
 sies that were then in being, but could take no No-
 tice of *Theodotus*, or the *Unitarians*, that appeared
 not until long after the Times, for which the
 Apostles Creed was composed. It seems to me
 therefore but a vain Boast of our *Socinian* Consi-
 derator, that the *Unitarians* will wrest the Two
 First Centuries from all the World (when it
 appears they were but Boys of about Ten Years old)
 for this Reason, because the Apostles Creed condemns
 not *Unitarianism* expressly before it had a Being, as
 neither does it *Papery*, but it speaks not a Word for
Unitarianism, or *Papery*, against the Catholick Faith,
 or Protestantism. But some Things sound loudest
 when there is least in them. Accordingly *Ignatius*,
 that was Contemporary with the Apostles in every
 Epistle (perhaps we are to except One) expressly
 owns the Divinity of our Saviour, confessing him
 to be our God beyond Time, and without Time,
 (the highest Expression of Eternity) and his Blood
 to be the Blood of God; and that it was our God
 that was Conceived in the Virgin's Womb, being
 the Eternal Word of the Father, the Son of the Father,
 who was pre-eternally with the Father, (and much more)

yet he takes no Notice of any that denied the Divinity of the Son of God in any one of his Epistles; but in every one of them he warns the Churches he writes to, to beware of the Elder fore-mentioned Hereticks, and uses the same Expressions against them which we find in the Apostles Creed; and embraces those Churches he writes to, as owning all the same Faith with himself. By which we see what was the Common Faith, and of what Quality was the Opposition against it in those Days; as also by what Measures and Reasons the Apostolical Symbol was composed. For the Denial of the Son of God's Divine Nature was no less opposite to the Faith of *Ignatius*, and those Churches, than eluding the Reality of his Manhood. Had there then been any *Unitarians*, they must have fallen under as severe a Censure as the *Docetists*, from *Ignatius*, that believed Christ to be God and Man. For he that believes Christ to be God and Man, must needs believe the Denial of his Godhead to be as Damnable, as the Denial of his Manhood. This Sense of our Vow in Baptism we find continued to be the Common Faith of *Christendom* down to our own Age, as hath been evinced by others. It sufficeth me to have accounted for the most Primitive Times. For by this Brief Account I think it appears that if the Question of the Trinity and Incarnation might be judged only by Testimonies Divine or Ecclesiastical, as the Church would have it, the more need to be said about it. And finding this *Theodotus*, and his Followers, *Artemus*, *Pantas*, and *Semoseanus*, &c. all condemned of Heresie by the main Body of Christians in their own Times, I do not think the *Unitarians* themselves would gainsay it, but that they thinking (as our Considerator says) that Expressions of the greatest Amplitude could not establish a Doctrine so contrary

to Reason, do find themselves obliged to use such Measures of Interpretation as are needful to avoid the Force of such Testimonies, and reduce them to a Consistency with the Nature of the Thing. But because they know the Divine Nature is so Transcendant above all other, that nothing which is not an Imperfection can be proved Inconsistent with the Divine Nature, unless it be by proving it repugnant universally to all Being, they peremptorily affirm the Thing is absolutely Impossible; and because we Mortals cannot know what is so Impossible, but by its Contradictionness, therefore they expressly Charge the Churches Faith with Contradictions. So that the Force of the Socinian Opposition rests wholly upon this Point; and therefore I shall endeavour Summarily to examine it. This Pretence of Contradictions they are continually braving us withal; but if waving such Ostentation they would view it well themselves, they would see none of them (except an odd Man of singular Confidence) can have any use of it. For being they have no Way in Reason to exclude the Trinity out of the Number of Existent Beings, but by thrusting it out of all Possibility of Being, it is certain no Part of Humane Knowledge can distinguish between the Possibility and Impossibility of Things, but what in Favour to Aristotle we commonly call Metaphysics, which is that Part of our Knowledge that extends itself beyond the Knowledge of Natural Things, that do exist. Neither can the Possibility of the Trinity be any other Way disproved but by its Contradictionness.

Now Contradictionness not being in the Real Beings, or in the Vocal Sounds, but only in the Repugnancy of our Thoughts, when we think the same Thing to be, and not to be. It can be nothing but an

an Affection of our Thoughts, and can be known by no other Part of Knowledge, but the Science of our Thoughts; now the Science of our Thoughts is as much the Definition of Metaphysics, as the Art of Thinking is of Logick. Moreover, the Divine Nature is purely Spiritual, but we all confess our Knowledge of the Possibilities and Impossibilities belonging to such an Abstract Nature is purely a Branch of the Metaphysics. So that on all Accounts it is apparent that in this Point Socinianism being nothing but a Disbelief of the Trinity, for its Contradictiousness, and Impossibility, it hath no Support from Humane Reason, but the Metaphysics, as from Divine or Humane Testimony it hath none at all.

When therefore in their late Pamphlets they make Metaphysical Reasons offered in this Dispute, to be no better, than Metaphysical Fooleries, what else do they do but teach us what Value we are to set upon their Belief of One Person only in the Deity, which they neither have, nor can have any other Reasons for. So the very Ground of their Opposition to the Church is laid upon an Inconsistency with themselves. As they have plainly no other Sort of Reasons, so they would not pretend to any of this Sort, but that their Disaffection to the Churches Doctrine makes them often to confound Incomprehensible with Contradictious in their Arguings against it, though they know there is a Difference betwixt them; for since Men have a certain Perception that there is really a Difference between a Thing and no Thing, and withal, are conscious to themselves that they cannot explicate or know what the Difference is, it is plain the Distinction betwixt Incomprehensible, and Impossible, or Contradictious, will ever be acknowledged.

And

And yet besides a due Regard had to this Distinction, little more is needful to defend the Catholick Faith against these Mens pretended Reasons: For if when they Charge the Trinity with Contradictions, they can only shew its Incomprehensibility, they trifle with us. For he that first believes that nothing Exists that is Incomprehensible, must believe next that there is no God to be worshipped. Now we must not give up the Catholick Faith for such a Reason as first destroys all Religion, and then involves the Faith of the Trinity in the Ruins. But if the *Socinians* do mean such real Contradictions as other Men are used to call so, then they must not only shew that in the Notion of a Trinity our Thoughts are at a Stand, and know not how to proceed forward; for so they are whenever we cannot explicate the Nature of the Being, which we think to be, or have not an adequate Conception of it; but they are further to shew, that when we think of the Trinity, in One Thought, we think that to be which in another we think not to be, or that we cannot but think the same Thing to be, and not to be, when we think there is a real Trinity. But it is certain that no such Contradictory Thoughts appear in our Professed Faith; for no Words in our Publick Confession, or Articles, (wherein our Doctrine of the Trinity is delivered,) do signifie, that we think there is a Trinity, and no Trinity, or One God, and not One God, or Three Persons, and not Three Persons, and yet our own Sense, we certainly perceive, we think, as we there say. How can this be Nonsense, when we feel our own Meaning or Contradiction? When we never say and unsay the same Thing; yet the *Socinians* Confidence can laugh us to Scorn, because we will not believe their Dictates concerning our own Thoughts, rather than the Inward Sense of our own Minds; but

but if they be so Sceptically inclined, they must even Mock on, for we are like still in this Matter to proceed by our own feeling.

I cannot deny but we may have provoked them, because in this Inquiry we have preferred the obvious and natural Interpretation of the Scriptures, the Testimony and Judgment of the Antient Fathers, and the general Councils, (of which the *Socinians* have a very mean Opinion,) before the Strength of their Reason; and have thereby shewed before their Faces such a Neglect of their Reforming Abilities, as it seems they cannot bear; and therefore we must bear the Effects of their Displeasure, tho' they Revenge the Affront upon us in Contumelious Reproaches of our God, and the God of our Fathers, whom we Worship, and make it their Sport thus to Cut and Wound the tenderest Hearts of all Good Men amongst us; but since it is their Pleasure thus to do, it is all the Pleasure we can yeild them, for as much as it is not in our Power to gratifie them any further; for leaving them to entertain themselves in the delicious Ideas of their own Performances, we must profess, and do profess, that by all they have said we cannot see any real Contradiction, either in that most Antient Sense of the Baptismal Form mentioned before, or in the Catholick Explication of it, comprized in the *Athanasian Creed*; and being there is no Contradiction in either, we are well assured there is nothing in Reason from the Nature of the Thing can be offered against the one or the other, and consequently there is no Reason in the World why we should not understand the meaning of our Saviour, his Apostles, and the Antients, from the Native Significancy of their Words, rather than from the groundless Ramblings of our own Imaginations; for we think it highly absurd to pretend to receive a Person's Meaning from his Sayings, and yet at the very same

same Time to destroy the Reason of that Speech, by making it insignificant of that, which the Expressions most plainly do signifie to all that understand the Language. For this is as if we should say to Christ, we understand the Thing without his telling, better than he hath told us it; yea, in the present Case before us, that we understand his meaning better than he has expressed it, when yet we have nothing but his Word to inform us, only some vehement Bodings of an over-bearing Fancy.

I shall briefly shew why we think there is no Contradiction.

First, In the Baptismal Confession.
Secondly, In the Churches Explication abridg'd in the *Athanasian Creed*.

First, Not in the Catholick Faith in Baptism, which is thus expressed.

The Catholick Faith is this, That we Worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, (or as it is afterwards,) the Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity is to be Worshipped. Where because Care is taken to signifie, that in this Unity and Trinity the diversity is not formally the Unity, but only that there is One in Three, and Three in One reciprocally, the Expressions are exactly weighed, being not only suited to the Baptismal Profession, but also to our Humane Way of Thinking, and all is safe, sound, and easie, this is the whole of the Faith, what is subjoined, (*viz.* That we neither confound the Persons, nor divide the Substance,) being a Negative, can add nothing positive to what went before, but is purely a Prefervative to guard the foregoing Faith of the Trinity from the Elusions of Hereticks, who were observed in all the Varieties of them then, to deny or evacuate the Reality either of the Unity, or of the Diversity, and this commonly upon Metaphysical Notions, Contradictions,

traditions, Nonsense, &c. of which in the Second Head. Now whatever the *Socinians* alledge to prove this Faith of the Trinity in itself Contradictory, is wholly built upon this Reason, and no other, (*viz.* That Three are more than One; and therefore when our Considerator would speak their Specifick Sense with exactness of Propriety, he calls it a numerical Contradiction in Contradistinction to a natural Contradiction. But if it be not a natural Contradiction, we will acknowledge as many and great *Socinian* Contradictions to be in the Trinity as they please, rather than they shall quarrel with us. And therefore without any Dispute we grant that Three are more than One; but this Reason is common to Three with all other Multitudes; for it is certain that all other, as well as Three, are more than One. If then it be a contradictory Thought to think the same thing to be really One, and as Much, and as really Three, for the same Reason it will Universally be as much a Contradiction to think the same thing really One, and as Much, and as really Many. But this we are assured by Experience is so utterly false, that the contrary is Universally true, because we have no Acquaintance with any One thing, but from the Condition of its Being, we see a Necessity in Reason to think that the same Thing is both really One, and as Much, and as really Many. Therefore it is no Implication of Thoughts (unless all the Thoughts of all Men be Contradictory) to believe the same thing both really One, and as really Many. Since the *Socinian* hath not yet done it, (tho' he should before he had laughed at the Blessed Trinity,) it is now incumbent upon him (if he will make good his Pretensions) to demonstrate, that Unity hath an irreconcilable Antipathy with Three in the same Being, when yet it ever consists with some other Multitude in the same Thing; or that in every same Thing

The Second
Book of
Consideration.

there may be, (and always is,) without any Contradiction, a real Unity, in a real Multiplicity, but cannot be a real Unity, in a real Trinity, in any same Thing whatsoever. But because the Reason is the very same in all Multitudes, therefore it is manifest to all Men, that have not a Luxuriancy of Wit, that this can never be demonstrated by Humane Reason, to which such an irreconcilable Antipathy in the Number of Three is altogether an occult Quality, but must be totally resolved into some unaccountable Aversion to the Trinity in Socinianated Fancies. To conclude, *Three* is one Sort of Manies. All Men may think with consistent Notions, every same Thing is really One, and as Much, and as really Many; therefore we may think without any Contradiction that it is possible for God to be really One, and as Much, and as really Many, even just so many as Three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are really, and as much Three; I mean plainly, as much, and as really diverse from one another as God is really One. Therefore no one of these is the other, and yet the God (who is every one of these) is really one and the same. From whence it is plain there is nothing in Reason to be offered against Baptizing into the Name of One God, being the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I add, if the *Socinians* do believe without Collusion, (as I think they do,) that Jesus Christ is the forementioned Son, into whose Name all Christians are Baptized according to our Saviour's Appointment, in Reason there is an End of this Controversie. Thus much I take to be plain, and it hath in it no Difficulty; nor can it wrack any Man's Thoughts, unless when the enraged Lust of an Impotent Curiosity stings him, and will not suffer him to be content to know things but in part in this State, where we cannot know any thing perfectly; and yet this is sufficient for all the real Purposes

poses of Christianity, unless it be to discover the Spurious Metaphysicks of Hereticks. For,

First, It appears all that believe thus much are (not nominal or mystical Trinitarians, as the Considerator miscalls them, but) real Trinitarians, if believing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be really diverse one from the other can make Men real Trinitarians; and if this cannot, nothing can; and yet they are no whit the less real Unitarians, if believing God to be really One, and but One and the Same, will make Men real Unitarians; and if this will not, I must ask, What Good beside there is in Unitarianism that makes them contend so eagerly for it? For really I can think of none. They are very full of the Cause I see, but what is it they would have? Would they have us be Baptized in our Infancy in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and in our Manhood as solemnly Renounce the God that is Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as we did the Devil when we were Children? Or would they have all Christian Nations forsake the One God of *Christendom*, and Worship the Unitarian God of *Turky*. Their rude Way of handling this tremendous Subject is apt enough to make many believe there is no God. But it is impossible for them to make any Catholick believe there is but One God, more than he does already. But to proceed.

Secondly, Since without any Contradiction there may be in One God Three really diverse each from the other, what subsists by that in the One God, which is common to the Three, (suppose the World by a Divine Volition,) hath its Subsistence by the One God, and every One of the Three, but what subsists in Union with that which is proper to One only, and not common to the other Two? (As suppose Manhood in peculiar Union with the Second,) it hath its Subsistence in the Subsistence of that One alone; for the Three being really diverse, it is no way inconsistent

with our ordinary Way of Thinking, that a Nature may be in Union with One of them, and yet with neither of the Two that are diverse from it. And this Humane Nature in such Union may be a sufficient Instrument for Redintegrating the Righteousness and Divine Life requisite to the Paternal Kingdom of God over Men. And so the Means of Communication of this Righteousness and Divine Life from its Original be as different from the First, as is the Second *Adam* from the First, or as is a Subsistence by meer Volition from a Subsistence by Personal Union. Now seeing in forming the Notion of the Trinity our Minds need not proceed so far, that in one Thought they must think that to be, which in another Thought they think not to be, 'tis plain there is no real Contradiction. Should we be here quite at a stand, not knowing how to go forward, yet that will not make these Thoughts inconsistent one with another, but only prove that we cannot perfectly expedite the whole Theory of the Divine Being. But then we thinking that it is the Incomprehensible Perfection of the Divine Nature which renders the Blessed Trinity a passible Truth, there is no Incomprehensibility peculiar to the Trinity from any Implication, but only what results from the Incomprehensible Being of God. And for this Reason indeed we confess the Blessed Trinity is Incomprehensible, and a Mystery, but not therefore an Absurdity, Nonsense, Contradiction, Jargon, &c. And God forbid if any of us should be impatient of the Drudging Part of Thinking, in a strict Computation of our own Thoughts, that they should lash forth into such a Blasphemous Intemperance and Insolence.

Let us now consider the Quality of the Adversaries Opposition, for it is a strong Presumption, that since the Belief of the Divine Trinity in itself is nothing

edit not; smitten Ourselves to ourselves; for the
transmission yew on ai it, shewib yiser gained 9971
draw

else but an Instance of a Thought most common to all
 Mankind, (for such is the believing the same thing
 to be really one and many) all Attempts to prove it
 Contradiction must needs fall short of the Mark; and
 therefore I observe the *Socinians* never so much as
 aim directly at it, but only by oblique Fetches. For
 we knowing of many Ways whereby the same thing
 is really one and many, they only labour to prove the
 Divine Trinity in Unity is by none of these Ways.
 Not being one consisting of Form and Matter, as one
 Man is really Form and Matter, Body and Soul, which
 are really many. Not one Essence, and many Ad-
 juncts; not one Substance, and many Accidents; not
 one Sort, which is one, and yet many; not one Multi-
 tude, which is one and many; not one Whole, which
 is one and many; nor in any other Way we are ac-
 quainted with; nor yet one God, and many Persons.
 Though almost every Inch of this Ground hath been
 disputed with them by one or other, yet (reserving to
 my self the Power of Revocation, as to this last,) I
 am here to deal more Frankly with them. And sup-
 pose that God is not one and many, in any of
 these Ways, which is the utmost any of their Argu-
 ments can conclude; but when from hence they in-
 fer, that God cannot be One and Three (i. e. many)
 in any other Way, I am to remind them, that if this
 Inference be right, it must be by the Rules of Divina-
 tion, for common Sense assures us it is not by Hu-
 mane Reason. For though we knew never so many
 Ways, and were never so certain it is by none of those
 Ways, yet that it is by no other will by no Means
 follow, unless we be Omniscient, and certain that
 God cannot know one more than we. When there-
 fore we find our Faith of the Trinity obliges us not
 to renounce one jot of our Reason, but only to retain
 some Modesty as to think we know not all that
 God

God knows, we wonder (if any Confidence could be wondered at in that Set of Men) that the *Socinians* do not see that the Force of their Arguments can reach no Man's Understanding until his Heart be thoroughly purged of the last Dram of Modesty, that so the believing theirs to be real Contradictions, may be planted in pure Impudence, where it will thrive best. It must be confessed that this Modesty looks like a sneaking, sheepish Quality, that makes a Man think and speak of his own Abilities with such Limitations and Reserves, as always lessens the pleasant Idea's he might otherwise have of himself, and allows him not to use one Superlative Word, nor suffer any Conceit in him that is brave, and bold, and big, or otherwise worthy of a great Wit, and celebrated Reason; I mean such a one as disdains to comprehend a Finite Nature, but has a clear, adequate, distinct Comprehension of infinite, even as distinct and certain, as comprehending the Notion which I have of infinite Power or Wisdom is the comprehensive Notion of infinite Power or Wisdom; and as adequate as a Negative Notion of Eternity is adequate to an Affirmative Notion of it.

Second Book
of Consideration.

And therefore as clear as it is, that he must needs be a most consummate Philosopher, and perfectly comprehend the universality of Being, who is sure the Universe is not a Windmill, provided he comprehends his own meaning when he thinks so. And because the common learned Mortals are apt to suspect such an Understanding is of a Gigantick Size, if not a Monstrous Shape, our Considerator takes Care to let the World know, that his Soul, though neither longer, broader, or thicker than his Body, nevertheless hath in it no less than an infinite Wit. If none but such as *Mr. Basset*, and *Cardinal Bellarmine*, should gainsay this,

this, he could huff them away like a company of witless, thick Skulls. But finding many other worthy Men obstinately to retain the Modesty to think God knows somewhat more than Men, and not only so, but to have the Confidence to plead for this Modesty in Bar to all the *Socinians* pretended Contradictions, he grows out of all good Humour with them, and commits them to a severe Durance, even to sit whilst he draws their Pictures, which he does in tolerable good Features and Colours, that so when he hath drawn with his Pencil a ridiculous *Sheak*, in Form of a Blind cross the Eyes from Ear to Ear, and written over their Heads, *Hypocritical Professors of Mystical Mummery*, he might with the greater Solemnity of an exquisite Mockery expose them to Publick View. But I forgot one Conceit of our Considerator, for in the Shades under the Left Ear of Two of them (which he miscalls the Bishops of *Salisbury* and *Worcester*) he has writ in Whispering Letters, *Though you look Brave, yet you are but Mungrels of Men, for want of common Sense and Reason; the Genuine Essential of Mankind*. Such Efforts of a Licentious Wit (though not allowed in Humane Conversation, unless to those that are bred for Sport) are yet found Necessary to Amuse and Divert us sometimes from observing the Craziness of an overt Discourse, and Varnish over an ill-jointed Argument. For take off the Artificial Paint of those Two Books of Considerations, and they plainly manifest the Difference betwixt a *Socinian* and a real Contradiction. For in this there is a Repugnance of Thoughts, but in theirs there is only an Absence or Cessation of Thoughts; as if we could think contradictorily of a thing, when we forbear to think, or suspend our Thoughts about it.

Second Book
of Confid.

Having

De Trinitate.

Having observed the Adversary's Opposition, before I proceed to the *Athanasian* Definitive it will not be amiss briefly to represent what other Men from Reason have offered in Favour of the Trinity. And First, many have observed that every thing in this great variety of Beings in the World is not only One and Many, but likewise precisely One and Three; so that a Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, is impressed upon the whole Creation. Amongst others I reckon *St. Austin*, who hath distinctly and copiously shewed this in a very numerous Induction of Particulars. And of the Two Sorts of Being, which we know, they observe First of Bodies, That every Body hath Three Dimensions, and no more; so that if Matter was Infinite, there would be a Threefold Infiniteness, every one really different from the other, in that One infinite.

How far the Unity in Trinity is decyphered in this may be seen by *Dr. Wallis* his Discant upon the Cube, wherein he shews those Forms of Expressions in the *Athanasian* Creed, which the Note-maker calls palpable Contradictions, are exemplified in the natural Condition of the Cube past all Denial, and are therefore no Contradictions. And the Considerator does but Banter with us, and traduce his Author, when he would have us believe the Doctor thinks that this is the Way whereby God is One and Three, or that the Trinity is God's being Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, for the Doctor expressly declares the contrary; and it is plain he only intends to shew in these Instances that the Same may constantly be One and Three, each Diverse from the other. Secondly, For a Spirit (of which we have all our Notices purely from our own Souls, and nothing else) they observe, That the Life is the Soul, the Mind is the Soul, and the Spirit is the Soul, and yet there are not Three Souls, but One

One Soul. Here is then no *replicia* in Man, nor Tritheism in the Trinity, though it is plain in a Man the Life is one, the Mind is really but inseparably another, and the Spirit is yet really another; for the Life animates all the Flesh that is quickned, but the Mind feels not its own Life, but by the Intervention of the Flesh's Motion, when and where the Flesh is moved; so that in this World the Flesh is between the Mind and its own Life in such wise, that the Mind hath not the immediate Sense of its own Life in the Body, having the Flesh as a Boulster to rebate the exquisiteness of such Sense pleasant or unpleasant, and temper it to this middle State here on Earth. And the Spirit is different from the other Two, for after all Sense, the Spirit freely acts the Body or not, as it likes, which we Experience in all properly Humane or Voluntary Motions and Actions; here then is not only a Shadow, but an Image of the Blessed Trinity, and all this appears in the Soul's sensible Communication with Flesh. But the Soul hath likewise a Threefold Communication with its self, which affords us yet a more express Image of the Divine Trinity. But I need not open this Matter, which Mr. Burrough of *Chemis, Bucks*, hath lately deduced by a continual Thread of Discourse to this Conclusion, *viz.* that the most distinct, positive Conception which we Mortals can form of the Supreme Spirit is this, that there is One God infinitely One, and Three Persons infinitely Three, no whit the less One God for being Three Persons, and no whit the less Three Persons for being One God.

*An Account
of the Tri-
nity from
the Perfe-
ctions of the
Supream
Spirit.*

When I consider we form all the positive Notions which we have of a Spirit solely from our Acquaintance with our own Minds and Thoughts, and that this Communication of our Soul with its self is nothing else but our Conscience, and that our Con-

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science

science is the immediate Seat of all Religion, and of our whole Capacity for Intercourse with God; and withal, that it is the Gospel Institution wherein God did first require expressly of Man, both to Worship him as a Spirit, and to Believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as being Doctrines of near Affinity, I say, when I consider all this, as I know no Objection against his Scheme, so I am apt to think, that in the Theory of the Trinity it is not improper (according to the Process of Thoughts he uses) to Contemplate the Deity under the Notion of the Supream Spirit, and deduce our Conceptions of the Trinity from the absolute Perfections of a Spirit: Much might have been observed from the Bishop of *Glocester*, the Dean of *St. Paul's*, and the Sober Enquirer, but that they all proceed purely upon Hypotheses. I shall therefore remark from the other, First, That every one that is capable of governing his Life by his own Counsels, being able to discern the same thing may be One and Many, and consequently One and Three, the Trinity is an Article not unsuitable to be entred into, a Covenant made with all Mankind, all Men having a Capacity to believe it that are capable of Religion. Secondly, As we gain more Understanding by further Enquiries into Nature, we more plainly see an Evidence of the Trinity imprinted upon the whole Creation. Thirdly, The more like any Nature is to the Divine, (as is the Spiritual than the Corporeal,) the more lively Characters of a Trinity in Unity appear upon it. Fourthly, Our own Capacity for Communion with God gives us above all the most lively Representation of One God in Trinity. Now if God be the Archetypal Nature, and all his Works in this visible World be Ectypal, as Reason teaches, and our Considerator himself confesses, here is plainly an Evidence in Nature of the Divine Trinity; and because there is none against

against it, as I have shewed, this ought to Sway our Judgment, because we find it in our Theories possible, and in Nature probable, for the same God to be really One, and really Three. I proceed now to consider the Catholick Account of the Blessed Trinity in the *Athanasian Creed*. Where, First, We consider it as a Denomination. Secondly, As an Aff-*veration*. Or, Thirdly, As an Explication of the Catholick Sense of the Covenant in Baptism.

First, As a Denomination it is declared, these Divine Three really Diverse each from other, are not Three Gods, but One God in Three Persons. Where because we have this Notion of every one of the Three that it is God, and One of the Divine Three really Diverse from each of the other Two, if we denominate what answers to this Notion by the Word a Divine Person, and intend precisely to signifie this Notion by that Vocal Sound, we give no Explication of the Trinity, but only impose an Appellative Name upon our Notion of a Thing, instead of a Periphrastical expressing of it. And this then is really and properly the Signification of the Word Person, or Divine Person, upon this Subject, whatever it signifies upon other Occasions, because the genuine Signification of Words is nothing else but the intended Meaning of the Speaker and Hearers. And this without any Blame is done where no other Reason requires, but the greater Expedition of expressing our Sentiments, and communicating our Thoughts with less Incumbrance of Language. And if the Opposers should object, that the Church assumes too much in imposing a Name upon her Notion, which was used otherwise upon other Occasions; it may be answered, if in Humane Persons the Word signifie otherwise, yet in Divine Persons we mean as before is declared. And when all Trades amongst themselves, all Fraternities,

all Professions, all Schools, all Sciences and Arts, do this in innumerable Instances for Readiness of Speech, and Dispatch in their several Employments, what Reason is there why the Catholick Church should be blamed for doing that in her Communion which all Communities of Men do without any Rebuke? For she must be Blameless in this, if, First, The Expression insinuates nothing unworthy of the Divine Perfections, which the *Socinians* as well as we confess of the Word Divine Person. For they confess Personality in the Deity, the Personal Subsistence being the most perfect of any we are acquainted withal. Nor, Secondly, Be not repugnant to the Scripture Declarations, which this is not; for as the late Archbishop of *Canterbury* hath observed, the Scripture speaks of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in such manner as we use to several Persons. And, Thirdly, if it be consented to by the Body of the Community, and Matter of Fact assures us, that the word *Person* hath been used for One of the Divine Three many Hundred of Years, to be sure longer than is necessary to fix the Sense of a Word, which is done in an Age; and this by all the Latin Churches; and the Dissent of the few *Socinians* is their fault, that refuse to consent to their Country Language. So that they might dispute whether there be Three in the Deity really Diverse from one another, but whether these Three be called Persons by the Church; or whether she means by Person One of the Three, and consequently whether *Person* so signifies on this Point, is past dispute. For nothing can be concluded from such a Process, but only that God is not so Three Persons, as Three Men are Three Persons, which is partly true, and partly false, as I shall shew by and by, and all confess it so to be.

Secondly,

Secondly, As an Affeuration of the Catholick Faith, all the Hereticks from *Simon Magus*, down to *Faustus Socinus*, confess both Humanity and Divinity in our Saviour, and the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and as *Irenaeus* and others often observe of their Hereticks, they allowed and used the Words of the Catholick Language; but then they pleaded they are not to be understood in Reality, but only in Shew, in Appearance, in Reputation or Opinion; now the Church believing Christ came not to teach us the Shews and Appearances of the Divine Kingdom, but the very Things themselves, nor to require of us in the Covenant of Eternal Life the Faith of Names, and Shadows, and Apparitions, but of true Realities, did ever oppose with great Earnestness the Seemings and Resemblances of the Hereticks. And therefore against the Hereticks Elusions of the Reality of the Trinity and Incarnation, which they would have understood, κατ' ὁμοίωσιν, κατ' ὄνομα, κατὰ συμβεβηκός, κατ' ἐμφασιν, κατὰ δόξασιν, &c. the Antients opposed that the Words were to be understood, κατ' ἀλήθειαν, κατ' ὁσίαν κατ' ὑπόστασιν, κατ' αὐτό, ὁληώς, ἀληθώς, &c. which are Words in their General Sense that import the Reality and substantial Subsistence of these Things; and therefore it is not strange that the Antientest of the Fathers use sometimes these Words in the laxer Sense, to avouch the real Truth of the Things believed, in Opposition to the Shews and Counterfeits of the Hereticks. For they saw well when the Hereticks were driven from that Evil Practice of theirs, and quitted their Imageries and Resemblances for downright Realities, they must at the same time give over their Opposition of the Trinity and Incarnation. As the *Socinians* confess Christ to be God, but not very God, or the True God, only God, κατὰ δόξασιν κατ' ὁμοίωσιν, as did the *Arrians*. And *Sabellianism* (which our

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Author of the Consideration Books says is the same with *Socinianism*,) confesses the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are Three, but only *καὶ ὅνομα* in Name. So that I verily believe those Expressions of Hypostasis Substance, Truth, and the like, were inserted into the *Athanasian Creed*, (as for other Purposes, so likewise) to obviate the Seemings and Appearances, whereby the Hereticks endeavoured to elude the real Diversity of the Three, or real Unity of the One, and the real Humanity or Divinity of our Saviour.

Wherefore since we can, as hath been said, without any Absurdity believe the same Existent Being to be One God, really One, and Three really Diverse one from another, we may without any Contradiction believe the *Athanasian Creed* in these Two Considerations of it, as an Indication or Asseveration of the Faith in Baptism. For thus far no more is contained in the Assertion of the Trinity than the very Belief of the real Trinity. Now of this Faith the Creed does indeed affirm it is necessary to Salvation, but no more, as hath been observed by others, because the Sentences declaring such Necessity are prefixed or annexed only to the Faith of One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. And it must needs be necessary to believe in One God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that are really Three, if Baptism, or the *votum Baptismi*, be a Means necessary to Salvation; or if Men be Saved by the Answer of a Good Conscience in Baptism, which is the Confession of this Faith from the Sincerity and Integrity of their Hearts. And the Creed not evidently requiring any more as necessary, there is no *Trinitarian* so rigid as not to acknowledge believing in One God Almighty, being the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, really Diverse each from the other Two, is sufficient for Salvation in this Point

of the Trinity. So that without expecting the Issues of Mens learned Speculations, we see the Faith of all Christian *Trinitarians* is clear from all Appearance of a Contradiction. For infuse the least Dram of Modesty, and it dissolves the Consistency of all Arguments against the Possibility of the Trinity, without the Use of any Metaphysics. And if it be not reasonable to believe that God may know One Way more than Men do whereby the same Thing may be really One and Many, there is no Humane Reason to be met with without the Precincts of *Bedlam*. But if the *Socinians* account it Unphilosophical to expedite Speculative Enquiries by the Use of Moral Vertues, I am to imind them we are not contending with them for the Glories of Philosophy, but for the Blessedness of Christianity; and particularly, that this Measure of Modesty is a necessary Ingredient into that Probity of Spirit, which is a Postulate indispensibly requisite to understand the Christian Doctrine. And I think it is no small Proof that the *Socinians* Belief of Contradictions in the Trinity is repugnant to the Faith which Christ really taught, because it will not endure this lowest Degree of Modesty. For how can that agree with the Doctrine of Christ, that will not consist with the Spirit of Christianity? Besides what the Gospel speaks to this Purpose, it is very unreasonable in itself to think that the Supernatural Discoveries God gave to his Church were written in such a manner as might render them proper Instructions for Men that account the Dictates of their own Wit to be Oracles, and their Understanding of the Nature of Things from their sensitive Observations to be the Standard of the Meaning of all Divine Revelations, and so make Christ not a Teacher, but a bare Prompter to Mankind. If not-
withstanding

withstanding all this, those Men will in this Debat renounce the Spirit of our Religion, and will admit nothing Heterogeneous or Alien amongst their Theories, they make it no longer a Christian Inquiry, but carry the Question out of the Church into the Commonwealth of Learning, to be tried by the Visionary Society, in which our Considerator claims the Right of a Member, which I know none denies him, but only the Offices of Dictatorship and Censorship, which he has assumed to himself, and oft exercises with Magisterial Dogmaticalness. But then he transgresses what he knows to be the Orders of the Society, and makes not good his Undertaking; for having charged the Trinity with Contradictions, he ought to have proved it; but instead of doing it, he puts us upon proving there are none, (which belongs not to us, but only to say we know of none,) and all he attempts is to shew we cannot prove there are no Contradictions; and thus he might make us believe there are Men in the Moon; for though he cannot prove there are, yet he can shew we cannot prove there are none. But we are not to disprove, but he is to prove, if he would have us believe him; for if he could prove it cannot be the Way we offer, yet we may very Rationally believe it possible to be another; and he offers nothing but confident unproved Assertions against this Belief. Therefore I would advise these Men that they be reconciled to the Spirit of Christianity again, seeing they cannot better conform to the Ceremonies of their New Society; and the rather, because it is a Question about Contradictionness, which is nothing but an Affection of Humane Thoughts; now it is a perfect Impertinence to offer any Thing for the Resolution of this Question, *Whether our Thoughts have such an Affection or no*, but what is taken from the Science of our Thoughts, deduced from our inward Sense

Sense of them. So that under the Pain of Impertinence (a Grand Villany and Capital Crime in their New Society) they will have nothing to do but Divide Thoughts, Add, Subtract, Multiply, and Make Equations of Thoughts, and the like. And therefore as they can never come within Sight of any Contradiction in the Trinity, while they retain any thing of the Spirit of Christianity; so if they will leave the Church to seek for any, they can come at none but by passing over the very Ocean of the Metaphysicks with nothing but Metaphysical Tackle; a Nauseous rather than Pleasant Passage, sure, to *Societian* Stomachs. But it cannot be avoided, if they will rationally maintain the Trinity is Contradictious; for if they will shew a Disagreement of Thoughts, it must be by the Knowledge of Thoughts; but if they think this Knowledge of our Thoughts is not the Metaphysicks they despise, I answer, The Church uses no other Metaphysicks beside to prove the Consistency of our Thoughts in the Notion of the Trinity, and has no use of any other any more than we need Necromancy to cast up a Tradesman's Bill.

But if these Men had rather compass Sea and Land, than entertain a Meaner Opinion of their own Understanding, there is no Help. But we must proceed in the Third Place, to consider the Explanatory Use of the *Athanasian* Creed. For the Church, tho' justified otherwise (as we see) in her Faith, may yet be obliged through the obstinate Importunity of her Adversaries in Charity, to afford an Explication of her Sense to those that are in Danger of Error or Heresie. Now this is summarily done, by asserting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are One God, and Three Persons. That this Explication is free from all Contradiction, appears first, from Experience, secondly, by

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distinctly viewing the Process of our own Thoughts, which we use in forming this Notion, this indeed is more proper to Theories.

1. That there is no Repugnancy in this Notion of the Trinity appears by Experience and Matter of Fact. For as much as this Creed hath in Effect obtained in all Nations of Christendom, by its Agreeableness in this Article with the Sentiments of all the several Individuals, (except some very few Persons of Odd and Singular Conceits by themselves,) and thereupon was received into many of their Publick Establishments, now such Consent is of greatest Authority in Theories, especially when our own Thoughts and their Consistency are both the Matter to be judged, and the Rule of Judgment, though it may fail when the Judgment is made by Sensitive Notices, as in Transubstantiation, and the like; but I leave this Consideration, and pass to the other, which I shall principally insist upon.

2. By viewing the Process of our own Thoughts distinctly, in forming this Notion, it will appear 'tis not Contradictory. I mean, the Notion of the Trinity thus explained is neither Inconsistent with itself, nor with the Perfections of the Blessed God. And if it be Inconsistent with our Notion of a Corporeal or Imperfect Substance, it is likely that may have deceived these more Confident rather than Wary Men, as being our most Obvious and Familiar Notion of a Substance. But then the Notion of a Corporeal God will not consist with the Creation neither, nor with God's being a Spirit, and therefore not with the Christians God; nor leave us any Religion, unless *Epicureans* and Spurious Fatal *Stoicks* be Religious. Why I think thus I desire the Reader to accept of this Succinct Scheme, not having Time to enlarge. I suppose here that our Acquaintance

tance with God's Skill in his Workmanship, framing the World, may be as extensive as Naturalists have taught.

But our Knowledge of what is purely God's Creating Skill reaches no further than thus, that we know it makes the Difference betwixt a Thing and Nothing. And that this Difference consists of the Difference between the Thing's Real Essence, and no Essence, and its Real Existence, and no Existence. Therefore our Minds assure us there is a Real Difference betwixt a Thing, and no Thing, betwixt its Existence, and no Existence, and betwixt its Essence, and no Essence, tho' what any of those Differences is we know not at all. We also surely perceive that our Notion of the World's Real Essence is not our Notion of its Real Existence; but what Reality that is, which answers either of these Two Notions in Contradistinction to the other, we know not. And the Reason why we know it not is, because we know not the former Differences. For if we knew what is the Difference betwixt a Thing, and no Thing, its Essence, and no Essence, its Existence, and no Existence, according to the usual Rules of Equations, we should know what is the Real Difference betwixt its Essence and Existence. But tho' we know not what this Difference is, yet we may be sure there is a Difference, as we see in the former Instances. Because we find by the Inward Sense of our own Minds, when we think of a Real Existing Being, we have One Notion of its Existence, and another of its Essence; and that those do differ as much one from the other, as the Question whether a Thing be, or not, differs from the Question what the Thing is, or whether it be this or that. Were not these Two Notions different, all Negative Propositions would be Nonsense or Contradictious in

our Mind ; neither would our affirming (*ex. gr.*) that the World does Exist, be a Complication of Notions, as all the Masters of the Thinking Faculty do confess agreeably to the common Sense of Mankind ; wherefore our Idea of the Real Essence, and our Idea of the Real Existence of the same Thing, are certainly diverse one from the other. For we truly think that the Essence of the Essence is a Tautology, because neither more or less of Reality is intended in the Essence of the Essence than answers our Notion of the bare Essence. But without any Tautology we say the Existence of the Essence, and the Existence of the Thing, which shews that we think there is some Reality of the Thing, not answered by our Thought of its Existence, and a Reality in the Existence not answered by our Thought of the Essence.

But though the absolute Notion of Existence and of Essence be diverse, yet we find we cannot think that either is answered in Reality, if both be not. For in Reality we think there is no Essence without its Existence, and *Vice Versâ*. But this makes not the Notions of these Two to be the same Notion. If I think of a Body, I cannot think it Real, unless also I think there be really Room for its Substance, and really Time for its Existence. Now tho' I cannot conceive the one of these is, and the other is not, yet my Notions of Body, of Time, and of Place, are certainly Notions different from one another ; for otherwise I could not think Two Men to be in divers Places at the same Time, or One Man to be in the very same Place at divers Times.

I have likewise a Notion of several Essences really different from one another, and likewise of several Existences really diverse from one another, as Three Trees have Three divers Essences, and Three divers Existences. And from these Principles attested
by

By inward Sense we see what are the Simple Forms of Contradictions belonging to these Notions. For unless we think a Real Essence to be no Real Essence, or a Real Existence to be no Real Existence, or else that either the Essence or Existence of the same Thing is one Real, and the other not, no Thought belonging to this Matter will be explicitly Contradictory, nor will any Thought be implicate by Contradictory, unless it be reduceable to some one of these Forms.

But then it is evident, that if we have a Thought of one Real Essence, that hath Three Real Existences, this is in none of those Forms, or reduceable to any of them; as neither is the Thought of Two Essences having but one Existence; therefore neither of these is a Contradictory Thought; for in such a Notion as either of these there is not any Essence or Existence thought to be no Essence or no Existence, nor is any Real Essence thought to be without its Real Existence, or any Real Existence without its Real Essence; so that no Thought in our Mind lyes cross to any other in the whole Process. And therefore such a Being cannot be proved Impossible from the Impossibility of such a Notion, seeing we can form the Conception of such a Thing without any Repugnancy in our Thoughts; if either of these Notions cannot be exemplified in a Material or Imperfect Substance, that is only a Demonstration that the Christians God is not a Body, but an Immaterial Being; but no Argument at all against the Divine Trinity, or our Saviour's Incarnation; if God be thought an Absolute Perfect Spirit, and Christ believed to be God, we will now see how far this clears all the Articles in the *Athanasian* Account of the Trinity and Incarnation; and by the same Means we may likewise perceive of how very great Importance the Belief of the Divine Trinity is in all Religion, when we observe that in the

the Notion we have of any Existent Thing, we certainly perceive that no less of its Reality goes to answer our Notion of its Real Existence, than to answer our Notion of its Real Essence, (First of the Trinity, seeing in the former Process the Three Existences are supposed Real, and the One Essence Real, neither can be merely Notional; and the Existences being not the Existences of an Adjunct, but of the very Essence, they are to be stiled, by Connotation, Essential Existences, to distinguish them from the Existences of Adjuncts. If this One Essence, that hath Three Real Existences, be not an Accident, but a Substance, they are Substantial Existences, in Contradistinction from Accidental Existences. If the Substance thought of be an Individual not Generical Substance, (as they speak,) such a Substance having Three Real, Essential, Substantial Existences, is a Substance subsisting in Three Real Subsistences, (that is, Hypostases,) and for the Sake of the *Latin* Translation, (and no other Need.)

I may add, if the One Substance be Spiritual or Voluntary, the Three Real Subsistences are really Three Personal Subsistences, that is, Three Persons, if the *Latin* Version be right, (of which by and by.) If this One Spiritual Substance be Divine, the Thing that answers this Notion is One God in Three Real Diverse Subsistences, as Real and as Diverse as are the Three several Subsistences of the Three several Trees foremention'd. Or thus, One God in Three Persons, as Real and as Diverse, as are the Three Persons of *Peter*, *James* and *John*, really Diverse, and yet the Divine Substance as truly One, as the Humane Nature or Manhood of *Peter* is truly the same with it self.

If I have cast up this Account aright there is no further Dispute in the Matter; and I can tell by Experience

Experience an ordinary Man can see no Mistake in it, but what an extraordinary Wit may do I cannot Divine; nor is it much Material if it be such a one as is resolved to be *ἀντροδιδάκτος*, not *θεοδιδάκτος*, for such cannot receive the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. I must confess myself so dull my Understanding discerns no Inconsistency in the whole Notion, unless they will contradict the uniform Sense of Mankind, that makes it evident we have a different Idea of the Existence and of the Essence of a Thing; for this being evident, all the rest proceeds without any difficulty. If they should be otherwise minded, they may try, as I said, whether in this whole Notion it be implied, (for it cannot be pretended to be expressed,) that the Existence of a Thing is not its Existence, or its Essence not its Essence, or that the Real Essence is without its Real Existence, or that any of the Three Existences is without its Essence, or is the same with, and yet different from either of the other Two. So that I think it is plain to Impartial Minds no Thought implied in this Notion subverts another, or interferes with it. All that can in Truth be said of it is, that it is the Idea of an unusual Thing, yea, of a most amazing Thing; and this I confess, for it must be so if it be the Right Notion of the Great and Terrible God.

But if they think they can draw up this whole Account righter than I have done, I need not tell them it must not be done by making smart and popular declamations against it; because every one knows that is not the Faculty of an Auditor, but an Orator, and is not used to adjust Accounts, but to persuade Men to stand to them when they are adjusted. And let them cast up this Account without casting up their own Accounts, for that indeed may bespatter it, and make the Account unlegible, but can never disprove it, or prove any Thing, but that they like it not, finding it

it not for their Turn. But if they should persist in their wonted Stile, and call One Essence in Three Diverse Substances Jargon, Gibberish, Metaphysical Fooleries, a Moon-coat, a Thingham, Something, Nothing, a new Implement, called an Extinguisher for the Sun, Mystical Magick, and the like, for their Health Sake they may know such Poppinjay Vomits shew their Stomachs are very foul; but for the Truths Sake I must tell them only, I was not thinking whether it be any or all of these Fine Trinkets, but only if there be a Substance subsisting in Three Diverse Real Subsistences; whether I could have a consistent Notion of such a Thing; and I find I can, and offer the Matter of Fact in the former Section for Proof of it, where it is done. For thereby I see a Trinity is not a Contradiction, and therefore no Impossibility, and therefore there is nothing in Reason against the Being of One God, and Three Hypostases or Persons; but it now that it appears there is a Notion of a Real Trinity, according to the Genius of Pregnant Wits they should on the other Hand cry out it is nothing but an empty Notion, a meer Figment, an odd Fancy, this would give us just Cause to observe, that as all Hereticks are extreamly given to please themselves, so these Men have that Singularity of Humour, that they are resolved nothing shall please them besides themselves. When the Church Baptizes into the Faith of One God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they revile this Faith with the Opprobrious Terms of Nonsense, Tritheism, Paganism, Contradiction, Samaritanism; that is as much as to say, we Worship a God without a Notion of him. When the Church gives them clearly her Notion in her Symbols, particularly the *Athanasian*, will they still be so cross as to cry out a Chimera, an airy Crochet? That is, we Worship a Notion without

without a God. Leaving these Men to satisfy the World about the forwardness of this Humour of theirs, the Church easily satisfies the Objection: For since it must be allowed that she has in her Baptismal Profession and her Creed both a God and a Notion, therefore she joins both together, and confesses there is One Person, *ὁμοούσιος*, of the Father, Another of the Son, and Another of the Holy Ghost, but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, all One, the Glory Equal, the Majesty Coeternal; so that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not Three Gods, but One God; and all this as has been shewed without any Repugnancy, yea, with Congruity to the common Ideas of Mankind; and no more is requisite to understand this Declaration which the Church gives of her Faith, but a Methodical Progress of Thoughts, directed by the Propriety of her Expressions. I presume this at once answereth all the pretended Contradictions of the Note-maker upon this Creed, and no more is needful to the Understanding Reader.

I owe them however these few Words about the Use of the Word Person, which can be no more but a Strife of Words, for the Use of it being only to translate the Word *ὁμοούσιος* by the best Latin Word then in Use, and no better being to be found for that purpose, the Antients are thereby acquitted of all blame, and we in following them, taking it from the Ancient Creed, and inserting it into our Articles and Liturgy. For the intended Signification, which is the meaning of the Word in the Church, must therefore be the same with Subsistence, the Original in the Creed, which it is set to answer. And no Exception can be made against this, besides those Three which I cleared it from before. But if these Men will be Content to be so blind to their own Intentions,

tentious, as I fear they will, we may further observe, that a Man cannot be without his Person; but if there be a Manhood really subsisting, there must be a Man. Now the Notion of the Humane Nature or Manhood being the Notion of the General Nature is not the Notion of the Man's Person; and the Notion which the Antient *Latins* (from whom the Church first took it) had of a Man's Person was not their Notion of the Man himself; (for you must say, thou art the Man, not by *Tu es Persona*, but *Tu es Homo*,) wherefore since the Man cannot be at all without his Person, and neither the Man himself, nor his Essence or Manhood, is his Person, nothing is left to answer the Notion which the *Latins* had of his Person, but either his Subsistence, and so Person and Subsistence is the same, or else the Essential Union of his Real Subsistence, and his Real Essence, and so it comes to the same in the present Case. For in a Being that hath Three Diverse Subsistences, there will be Three as Diverse such Essential Unions, as the Three Subsistences are Diverse, and consequently Three Persons, because Three Subsistences; which shews how great is the Agreement betwixt the Original and the Translation, being either the same, or equivalent. Not but that there are sundry Inequalities betwixt the *Greek Hypostasis* and the *Latin Persons*; but then those Differences affect not the Present Inquiry. For, First, there is a Subsistence of every Substance, but no Subsistence is a Person, but that of a Voluntary or Rational Being; but then the Divine Being is Voluntary, and therefore its Subsistence is a Person. Secondly, The Subsistence is said to be both of the Man and of the Manhood, but the Person is the Person of the Man, not of the Manhood; now this comes all to one in the Churches Case, for she teaches that there are Three Persons, the One of the Father, the Other of the Son, and the Third of the Holy Ghost, but not that there

are Three Persons of the Deity; though this might have been said by Hypostases, yet it is not in the Creed. Thirdly, Subsistence doth not connote Existence and Presence, but Person signifies Subsistence, and connotes Presence; and as the one is more eyed than the other, it is sometimes answered by ὑπόστασις, and sometimes by πρὸςωπον. I remember an *Ethiopic* Creed turned to this Purpose, *I believe in One God, and Three Faces*; but if there be Three Divine Subsistences, they must be present to one another, and have that Reciprocal Aspect facing as it were one another, as is always required to Personality; so that the Inadequateness of these Words is of no Concernment in this Debate. So long as it is certain, the Notion of Person antiently was not the same with that of the Man, or his Manhood, no fitter Word in all the *Latin* Tongue could be found; and its Propriety is sufficiently answered, allowing for the Ideoms of Diverse Languages.

It's true, the *Romans* bending their Thoughts more to the Business of Humane Life, Wealth, Power, Empire, than to Theories and Sciences, more frequently treat of Civil and other Accidental Persons, than of Essential Persons. But still we find their Notions in them kept the same Proportion that Civil Things have to Natural Essences. For Example, the Person of the Consul was not the Consul himself, nor the Consulship; for speaking their Notions, they could not say to the Consul, *tu es persona consulis*, or *tu es persona consulatus*, but *tu geris sustines, &c. personam consulis, tu es consul*. So that the Man's having the Consulship, or his existing Consul is the Person of the Consul, and the Consulship was not his Person, but the Property of his Person; and so in the other Civil and Accidental Personages. But in Essential Persons

the Essence is no Property, because Property is somewhat not of the Essence; and therefore the Property belongs to the Divine Persons, not as Essential Persons, but as such Persons, Father, Son, &c. of which more anon; by which we see these Persons are Analogous to what we mean by Person in the Trinity. Now this Civil Person was the Person of the Officer, not the Person of the Man; for strip the Man of his Office, and all things else, yea, by a wild Supposition, imagine no other Thing in Being besides him; yet if you leave him a Manhood existing, you leave to him the Essential Person of a Man: For you leave to him a Real Subsistence and a Presence, because every Conscious Being is reciprocally present to itself; accordingly the Person of a Rich Man is his existing Rich, or the existing of his Riches in the Disposal of his Will, the Person of an Old Man is his being Old, and so of the rest. Now since several such Properties, both Natural and Civil, may have their several Real Existences in the same Man, we find it is usual with the Authentick Latinists to speak of several Real Persons, both Natural and Civil, as really subsisting in the same Man that hath but One Understanding, One Will and Energy, contrary to what our Considerator affirms, that there can be but One Real Person properly so called, (and not many Diverse really from one another) in a Being that hath but One Will, Understanding and Energy, which yet he asserts with a Sultan-like Haughtiness, but without any Authority, unless Socinus can Authorize him, as well to correct the Masters of the *Latin* Tongue, and inform them better in the Meaning of their Native Language, as to teach the Primitive Fathers the Sense of the Baptismal Stipulation, from whom we should learn it in these Days.

First Book
of Confid.

But

But after the Barbarous Nations had broken the *Roman* Empire, a New Set of Phrases very different became fashionable. These (and many others belonging to other Circumstances of this Matter) for Example. The King's Majesty enacts Laws, another's Highness promised me a Kindness, his Lordship befriended me, his Excellency preferred me, his Grace is my Patron, his Worship is my Neighbour, &c. now such like Forms in a continued Speech must needs by degrees thrust the Word Person out of its old Place, unless the Speaker will fall foul upon himself, and make his Expressions interfere with one another; and in Fact we see they have quite turned the *Latin repraesento* out of Doors. For they could say *repraesentat se*, but we cannot say a Man represents himself with any decent Congruousness; and Person (in our present Use of it) cannot agreeably above Once in Twenty times be rendred into *Latin* by *Persona*, but commonly some otherwise, and most frequently it signifies *homo* or *se*.

But this was not the Use of *Persona*, (unless as a Man's House and Land is called his Possession by a borrowed Phrase,) when the Church first called the Three Subsistences in the Deity Three Persons. And therefore I must observe, that all Contradictions in the Trinity, argued from this latter Use of the Word, (as almost all the *Socinians* are,) are plainly of Gothick Extraction; and being they are bred out of the Corruption of the *Latin*, fly-blown by the Prolifick Fecundity of *Socinian* Wit, I must leave it to themselves to tell the World what Sort of Vermin these New Little creatures are, and whether the Equivocal Brood are to be called Gothick or *Socinian* Contradictions, that I may have no more Dispute with them, either *de re*, or *de nomine*. For my Part I think these pretended Contradictions are as despicable as they are detestable, and:

and therefore have ventured to use these mean Expressions of them ; for whatever Respect may be due to the *Socinians* for their manly Accomplishments, yet none can be due to such Things as these, which are not more Rash and Audacious than they are Impotent, whether we judge of them by the Humility of a Christian, or the Reason of a Man.

But I have something more material to observe concerning this, for hereby it is evident that the Antients and the Moderns did both believe the same Unity and Diversity in the Blessed Trinity, notwithstanding their different Method of casting up the Account ; for the Fathers taking the Subsistence for the Person, did accordingly teach that the Three Divine Persons were wholly as Diverse as the Persons of *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, are Three Diverse Persons, as they ought to do ; but the Schools never said so, nor could they in Consistency with their own Notions. For they in Compliance with the common Usage and Fashion of their own Times defined a Person *Suppositum rationale*, but supposed notwithstanding they ought to be called Diverse Divine Persons, because the Subsistences were really Diverse, which was the formal Reason why it was denominated a *Suppositum*, though the Substance was the same in the Three ; by which it appears that the Schools did believe the true Diversity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, was nothing but the Real Diversity of the Three Subsistences, as did the Fathers ; and what the Fathers properly and rightly called Three Persons in the Trinity, they stiled Personalities, not Persons ; which is a *Latin Word*, I guess, near Contemporary with *Quidditas* and *Habitudo* ; but both the Fathers and the Schools thought the same Unity and Diversity to belong to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, both confessing

confessing the Father was God in One Real Subsistence,
 the Son was God in quite Another Real Subsistence,
 and the Holy Ghost in a Third; now this implying no
 Contradiction, as has been seen, I discern not why
Petavius largely, but not constantly, and *Curcellanus* the
 Trimmer dogmatically, but weakly, should exhibit
 the heavy Charge of Tritheism against several Fathers,
 for teaching that the Three Persons in the Trinity are
 as Diverse as the Persons of Three Men; and though
 Dr. *Cudworth* joins with them in the Charge, the bet-
 ter to accommodate Platonism with the Christian Do-
 ctrine, yet I find none of all his Quotations comes
 home to the Point, notwithstanding our Considera-
 tor's Confidence in them. For when they use the
 Comparison of a Tree and its Branches, the Foun-
 tain and its Streams, the Sun and its Gleams, a Father
 and a Son, the Water and the Vapour, to illustrate
 the Sameness of the Substance, these being but Compa-
 risons, are satisfy'd by the general Observation, that
 every Thing in the World is both like and unlike every
 other Thing. Now since this was all spoken against the
Arians, who believed the Nature of the Father was of a
 supream and Proper Divinity, and the Nature of
 the Son of an Inferior and Improper Divinity, either
 Numerical or Specifical Sameness, was sufficient to
 their Purpose, which was to shew, that which is of
 another hath not a Nature in its Condition inferiour to
 its Source, which was all they needed in their Contest
 with the *Arians*. For it appears from *Petavius* him-
 self, that the Fathers, yea, the accused Ones, did own a
 Numerical Unity of the Divine Essence in the Three
 Persons. Had the Fathers, that said the Father, Son,
 and Holy Ghost, were as much Three Persons as *Peter*,
James and *John*, taught likewise, that they were as
 much Three Gods as these Three are Three Men, this
 had been home to the Point, but this they constantly
 denied with Abhorrence.

And

And it is very unreasonable to Charge Men with teaching such Doctrines as they constantly and expressly disavow, by carrying their Similitudes beyond the Use they make of them; the Essence, being common to Three Diverse Persons, is *ομοιον*, not *ταυτον*, though it be the same numerically, as belonging to the Three jointly, as one common Estate to Coheirs is amongst Men; nor is this a Trinity of Names, or partial Notions, if there be (*in re*) what answers our distinct Notions; that is, if God hath really an Essence, and Three distinct Existences. The Doctors remaining Quotations about Numerical and Specific Unity will be more naturally expedited by and by. I deny not but the Schoolmen were the first Authors of the New Notion of the Word Person; but it will by no Means follow from thence that they were the first Asserters of the Numerical Unity of the Divine Essence; for to Name no more, *St. Augustine* does plainly and largely teach it in his Books of the Trinity.

Thus much for our Theories; and our Insight into the Nature of Things rather favours than gainsays them; for we thinking every same Thing to be really One and Many, do observe that Matter, the only Substance of this Visible World, becomes many by Division; now this Multiplication by Division as much diminisheth its Greatness, as it increaseth its Number; and were the dividing Agency, or the dividing Motion actually infinite or absolutely perfect, it would annihilate the material Substance, as destroying its Quantity and Extension; but an infinite actual Agency in the Divine Substance is so far from destroying the Divine Substance that they are really One. If then we think that really One and Many belongs to the

Aideal, the Eternal Invisible Being, as we see it does
 to all Beings we are acquainted withal, we should
 suspect it may, not by Division of its Substance, but
 by Multiplication of its Subsistences or Hypostasi. This
 Visible Substance is such a sluggish Lump, that it will
 not stir an Inch but by main Force; and when it is
 forced, though it was to save the World, it will nei-
 ther hasten nor slack in its Pace, nor bend its Course
 an Hair's Breadth, but by the like Main Force; such a
 surly Thing as this is fit only to be under the Pow-
 er and Direction of some other, which is an Absolute
 Perfect Being, in which we confess there is no such
 Substance as Matter is. Now if to inquire into the
 Substance or Essence of this most Perfect Being, we
 should ask, why we think one Thing a Perfection,
 and another an Imperfection? We cannot find any
 Reason for this Difference, but that the one is a most
 Consummate Joy or Bliss, or contributes somewhat to
 it, and the other destroys and obstructs such Joy and
 Bliss, according to these Measures, which I take to be
 right. The Substance of all Perfections, as such, is an
 Actual Consummate Joy, or a most Absolutely
 Compleat Bliss; and consequently the Substance of the
 most Perfect Being is such Joy or Bliss, and Wisdom,
 Power, Goodness, Presence, &c. belong to this
 Substance, as Extension, Impenetrability, Locality,
 Successive Duration, &c. belong to Matter; and this
 Joy is the Strength and Power of the Will, and yields
 the Force in all Volitions, and consequently is the E-
 nergetical Spring of all the Motions in the World,
 which are all from the Efforts of some Divine or
 created Volition; now there appears no Repugnan-
 cy of Thoughts in thinking such an Absolute, Perfect
 Joy to subsist in Three Real Subsistences, rather
 than in One. If the *Antitrinitarians* can demonstrate

it to be a Contradiction, I should wonder at their Abilities; I am so much to seek, that I perceive not which Way they can go about to shew the One Subsistence is so much as more probable than the Three. And yet if this be not done, (and they as yet have not so much as attempted it,) their Eternal Ingeminations of Nonsense, Contradiction, Contradiction Nonsense will have no more Reason or Sense in them, than the more Melodious Accents of Reverberated Ecchoes in the Woods; which we may have without going to the Charge of buying Brief Notes, Brief Histories, and Two Books of Considerations, those Operose Pieces, or Operose Proofs; but perhaps the Three Subsistences of such Substantial Joy are the most probable Side of the Question; for there is no Joy which hath not a Reciprocal Presence to itself. And as a Notional Subsistence of Joy is sufficient for a Notional Joy like ours, so one would think a substantial Subsistence of it is requisite to the Substance of this Joy; and its Presence to itself being both absolutely Perfect and Reciprocal, its Subsistence will be Substantial, and likewise more than one. And lastly, because this Joy is a Spirit, these Diverse Substantial Subsistences of this Substantial Joy will be Three, and no more, as Mr. Barrough in his Account of the Trinity hath shewed; but though this should have but a little Probability, yet if any Man should call the Divine Substance Absolute Perfect Joy or Bliss, being encouraged thereto by what I said before, and the New Testament making *ὁ πατήρ* the Blessed, the Peculiar Title of God, even of the Father, and the Son, he safely might affirm this Substantial, this One Absolutely Perfect Joy, this Blessed One, does subsist in Three Really Diverse Persons, or Subsistences, properly so called, without any

any Apprehensions from the *Socinians* Opposition.

For if a Man can but keep himself from thinking God's Substance Material or Imperfect, he is out of the reach of all their Arguments, whereby they would prove the Blessed Trinity to be Contradictions. Now this Joyous Substance is no Body, because it requires a Presence to its self, whereas an Impenetrable Substance cannot be present to its self, and to be so requires a Reciprocal Subsistence, and therefore divers Subsistences; and being an Absolutely Perfect Joy, these divers Subsistences must be more than Notional, even Real and Substantial Subsistences. According then to our Skill in the Nature of Things, the most Perfect Substance in the most Perfect Way of Subsistence, is One God in Divers Subsistences or Persons, (and of Mr. *Burrough's* Performance can satisfy others as much as it does me,) even in Three, neither more nor less. When the Considerator asks if Three be necessary to compleat the Perfection, why not Seven? He should have thought if Two Eyes make a more compleat Man than One, why not Five by the same Proportion a more compleat Man than Two. So that if we might trust our own Skill, the Absolute Perfection of the Deity argues the Real Trinity, which, as we saw, was not inconsistent with itself; so we see it is most consonant with the most positive Notion we can have of the most Absolute Perfect Being. The *Socinians* Arguments are never carried farther in their utmost Resort than an Appeal to our selves or others, whether we would not think it absurd to affirm of a Man, or any Body else, (for the Angelical Nature is unknown,) what we assert of God in the Trinity: Now be it so, nothing will follow from thence but that the Divine Substance and Existence is not like a Man's or any Creature's

ture's in this Respect; and consequently our Considerator cannot pretend in Reason to have proved in his Considerations, and Notes, and History, any thing more than that it is impossible for a Corporeal Substance, or an Imperfect Being, to subsist in Three Distinct Essential Subsistences; and in Truth I think it not worth while to contend with a Man so confident about that, be it one Way or the other, he has himself an Observation that may confirm us in this. He meets with a Cartesian, Platonick, Aristotelian, a (Pythagorian, or) Mystical Trinity, and a Trinity in Ciceronian Propriety: But he finds no Epicurean, or (which is in Effect the same) Stratonick-Stoical Trinity; of all the numerous Sects of Philosophers at *Athens*, only these Stoicks and Epicureans, when they thought *St. Paul* taught that Jesus was God, laughed then at the Apostle, no less than the *Socinians* do now-a-days at the Divinity of our Saviour. We may suppose we have by our Uniform, Sensitive Observations, so many certain Notices of the Corporeal Nature, that unless we disbelieve these we can no more believe Matter capable of Three Diverse, Essential, Contemporary Subsistences, than all the Absurdities of Transubstantiation; and therefore these Spurious Stoicks and Epicureans, who believe there is no other Substance besides the Corporeal, cannot believe a Trinity possible. But none of those that believe an Immaterial Substance can perceive any Contradiction in a Real Trinity. For if they think there is a Thing, whose Substance differs as much from the Substance of this World, as Matter does from no Matter, no Reason can be imagined why it should be Contradictory for that Blessed Being to have such Transcendent Perfections above all Things here, as do require its Subsistence should also differ as much from the Subsistence of all Corporeal Things, as Three differs from One; for

for this Difference is not so wide as the confessed Difference betwixt the Two Substances. So that *Plato*, *Pythagoras*, *Cartesius* did, and *Aristotle* consistently with his Principles, if he believed the Creation, and all others that believed the Being of an Incorporeal Substance, might acknowledge a Real Trinity, as we see their Followers do; but *Epicurus*, and *Strato*, and all such Corporealists consistently cannot; but then these are all Atheists directly, and Antitrinitarians but in consequence. Now if the *Socinians* and others can first prove the Epicurean Material God is not a Trinity, and then prove it to be no God, we need not gainsay them; only we say there goes more to prove the Divine Trinity contrary to Reason, than demonstrating, that if God be a Trinity, then in this Respect he must not be like a Man, or any other Creature, either in his Essence or Subsistence. And because the *Socinians* cannot pretend to have evinced any more by their presumed Contradictions, than such a Disparity between God and Creatures, we are not beholden to them for this Information; for this we knew before, that our God had not the Likeness of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Waters under the Earth; but then they can by no Means be excused from an Intemperance of Spirit, who before they have carried their Proofs any farther than thus, have a Thousand times not only defied, but with the utmost Contumeliousness defied the Catholic Church, and what is worst of all, the God she worships; but I would have God and my Friends easie to forgive all such Things to them, provided they be not too easie to forgive themselves; for if they be, as God will not, so he requires no Man to forgive them.

This

This is all I have time to say of the Three Persons, and their Distinctness; but beside this, Absolute Diversity, there is yet a farther, which they call a Modal Difference, and the Foundation of it, *τρόπος υπαρχεως*, or a Mode of the Person of the Existence or Subsistence. Now if One was only precisely not either of the other Two, we must call them Three Diverse Persons; but this will give no Reason why One should be styled the First rather than the Second, or *vice versa*; but if there be a Cause in the Real Condition of these Persons, why One should be the First, and the Other the Second, and the Other the Third, then the First Person or Subsistence will not only be the First, but the Primary Person or Subsistence of the Deity, and the Second will be the Second, and Secondary Person and Subsistence of the Deity, and the Third the Tertian Person or Subsistence of the Deity. How far this accords the Platonick Trinity with the Christian I leave to others; but they must be equally Perfect Subsistences, or else the Essence subsisting is not absolutely Perfect, as Mr. Burrough hath shewed. Now from hence therefore there is a Reason why the One is Father, the Other the Son, and the Other the Holy Ghost; they that assign this Mode for the Difference betwixt the Father and the Son, &c. do not only speak true, but assign all the Difference betwixt them, according to our Way of distinguishing, when we speak to such as are willing to understand our Meaning; but when we have Cavillers to deal withal we use more wary, though more cumbersome, Expressions to stop their creeping Holes. If One Man be tall, and another low, wherein lyes the Difference betwixt them but in their Stature, and if amongst Ten pieces of Gold of the same Value, Stamp, Metal, One hath the Face Stampt to the Right, and the Others to the Left, what is the difference betwixt this One and the

the Rest? Do we not say the Posture of the Face? For we use not to assign that for the difference between Two, wherein they agree, or are alike, and this in fair Communication is all the difference we take notice of. For when we enquire what is the difference betwixt Two, that they are supposed One, and Another is supposed in the Question; for it is not asked whether they be Two or no, but in what they differ; and that must be somewhat belonging to One that is not found in the Other. Now the Substance of the Three Divine Persons is One, and an Essential Person is found in the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; but Paternity belongs only to the First, Sonship to the Second, Procession, or Spirator to the Third, as their proper Characters and Modes.

The Divine Substance is numerically One, the Persons specifically One, and numerically Diverse, the Characters are neither specifically or numerically One, but only generically, they being all Modes of the Substances, but no Two Paternal or Filial Modes; if these Modes immutably belong each to its respective Person, they are infallible Notes that the Persons are Diverse, as by the Posture of the Face, if it be diverse upon Two Pieces, though they be removed out of my Sight, and brought again, I certainly know which is which. I therefore thus far agree with the Considerator, that when *Justine*, *Irenaeus*, and other Antients, speak of the Modes of existing, as the difference betwixt the Father and the Son, they did not mean there was only a Modal Difference, they were far from thinking it was no more than different Habitudes, Respects, like Absence, Presence, Posture, Adherence, but they meant Real and Absolutely Diverse, Individual, Essential Subsistences, whose Absolute Diversity was demonstrated to us by those several

i. *Consid.*

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Characterizing Properties, Paternity, Sonship, and Procession; but I think not as he, that by a Mode they meant a Particular, Individual, Intelligent Substance or Essence, for this does not appear to be their Sense; nor was it then the Sense of the Word Mode or Person in those Days among the *Latins*, nor any greater Difference was designed by that Note than an Individual Subsisting, or an Individual Subsistence of an Intelligent Substance or Essence; but then I add, that this is just the Faith critically delivered in the *Athanasian Creed*, that declares there is One Person of the Father, and Another of the Son, but the Godhead of Father and Son is One. And abating the change in the Notion of a Person, (that alters not the Faith in the least,) it is the same Difference betwixt the Father and the Son, which the Schools always taught; for they said not only that these Modes were Diverse one from another, but that the Persons of the Father and the Son were Diverse also, and were as different Subsistents as Three several Hypostases or Subsistings could make Three different Subsistents; some *Trinitarians* of late have indeed objected Contradiction to each other's Explication. But the Reason is, because (though I say not all alike yet) all understand themselves well, but one another not so well; and to this Misunderstanding (setting aside Personal Offences) is owing all their mutual Opposition; for to say nothing of the Platonick Trinity, it appears by what hath been said, the Christian Trinitarians, Nominal, Mystical, and Modalists, as the Considerator miscals them, are all of the same Kind, and all Real Trinitarians, and none are Sabellians or Socinians in Masquerade or Ridicule; for unless a Real Subsistence,

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stence, and no Real Subsistence of a Thing,
 ave no Real Difference, they are no Sabelli-
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 stanting, answers in Reality our Notion of a Thing
 not really subsisting, I know not why the Con-
 siderator so frequently says Sabellianism and Socinia-
 nism are the same ; the Sabellians made the Father,
 Son, and Holy Ghost, to be One and the Same
 God, only under Three several Names, as *Caius*
Julius Cesar was One Emperor. If the Socinians
 believe with the Sabellians the Father and the
 Son to be the same God, their denying the
 Divinity of the Son, is denying the Divine Na-
 ture of the Father with the Atheists. If with
 the Sabellians they confess the Son in this Trini-
 ty of Names signifies the true God, and yet deny
 Jesus Christ to be the true God, with Antichrist
 they deny that Jesus is the Son of the Father
 are spoken of ; the Interests of Numbers and
 Antiquity, which he designed to serve by joining
 these Sects into One, is indeed palpable, but the
 falsity is not to be hid ; and indeed his Books so
 abound, with such like unfair Insinuations, and he
 hath mixed with his Turns of Wit so many
 crooked Windings, that a Stile and Learning in
 any respects commendable he hath utterly viti-
 ed by its Insincerity ; for this will degrade a Man in
 his Publick Character, making him of a Publick
 Agent or Advocate, a Petty Solicitor, that prostitutes
 his Honour, Decency, Sanctity, and Modesty, to serve
 the Pleasure and Lust of his Party. If the Reader
 remembers, as I said, that neither One Essence exist-
 ing in Three several Existencies, nor Two Essences
 existing in One and the Same Existence, is reduce-
 ble to any Contradiction, I shall need only to say
 this

this little of our Saviour's Incarnation; for since the Son's Existence is not the Father's, nor the Holy Ghost's, the Existence of Christ's Humane Nature being the same with the Son's, is the Existence of neither of the other; and because the Existing is the Person, the Divine and Humane Nature in Christ are Two, and this Person is One and the Same; and because the Finite Nature hath no Existence of its own, other than the Existence of the Infinite, it is totally in Personal Union with the Infinite, and God and Man in Christ have both One Person, what the Considerator objects, that the Natures are not commensurate, which he interprets equal; proves nothing but his own Inadvertency; for he certainly knows, that an Inch and a Thousand Miles (having one common Measure) are commensurate one with the other, but far from being equal.

When I say **God**, I express my absolute Notion of him; when I say the **whole God**, I speak the same Notion, with the Additional Notion of a Respect to his Parts; but since God hath no Parts, there is no **whole** truly belonging to the Notion of God; when therefore the Humane Nature hath a Whole and Parts, but the Divine Nature neither, how will he prove them any more Commensurate or Incommensurate, than the Waves of the Sea to be Just or Unjust. Not Commensurability or Incommensurability, but Immensity is the Attributes of Christ's Divinity; if he please to try his Abilities in such Equations, when he has found out the Equation betwixt the brightness of Scarlet, and the sweetness of Honey, he will see, that as in the Divine Nature there is more Wisdom and Benevolence, so in the Humane there is more Bulk and Impenetrability, &c. and so let

et him proceed to his Demonstrations; but since it
 is enough to observe, that since this Objection from
 the Incommensurateness of the Two Natures cannot
 be made but upon the Supposition that the Divine
 Nature hath Parts out of Parts, and a commensurate
 Space, the pretended Contradictions are exactly with the
 same Batch with all the former; and if it was a Proof,
 would only prove it impossible for an Humane Na-
 ture to be in Hypostatical Union with an Infinite Epi-
 curean God; see we here from what Fountains they
 draw all the Contradictions they charge the Trinity
 and Incarnation withal; his Objection of Two Wills
 anticipated; for if Two Substances, as has appear-
 ed, may have One Subsistence, Two Wills may, and
 then there is but One Person; for the Sameness of the
 Person consists not in the Oneliness of the Will, but in
 the Unity of the Existence. I must now leave the
 Socinians (they have their *Sancho Pancha* amongst
 them) to make themselves Sport with their new-
 fashioned Contradictions, which perhaps is all that
 can be made of them; and refer it to the Age to
 judge whether we Catholics have taught the People
 Contradictions, or they to Revile and Defie the God
 of Israel, and the Israel of God; and so conclude,
 that since the Reason of the Thing does no ways con-
 tradict the Doctrine of the Trinity, it is to be judged
 only by the Testimonial Evidence of the Scrip-
 tures Tradition; and this is to be understood according
 to the common Reason of Speech, or common use of
 words, and by no means according to the Socinian Rules
 Interpretations, which our Considerator tells us do
 now, in this Doctrine, to understand Assertions con-
 trary to the utmost Amplitude of Expression; and the
 first of *Genesis* possibly to be a Description of some-
 thing else than the Creation, of which he gives us some
 specimens in his Brief History; such Licentiousness
 destroys

destroys the Use of Language in Writings, for accord-
ing to these most unreasonable Measures of Expound-
ing the *Cratolian* Catechism, as the Summary of the
Athanasian Faith, and the *Athanasian* Creed, the Epi-
tome of *Socinianism*.

Space the printed Contradictions exactly with the
same again with all the former; and if it was a Proof
would only prove impossible for an Human Na-
ture to be in Hypothetical Union with an Infinite Epi-
curan God; for we have from what I maintain they
draw a false Contradiction they charge the Trinity
and incarnation withal; his Opinion of Two Wills
is not disputed; for if Two Substances, as has appear-
ed, may have One Substance, Two Wills may; and

then there is but One Person; for the Substance of the
Person consists not in the Objects of the Will, but in
the Unity of the Existence. I must now leave the
Readers (they have their Liberty) to make their own
use of the above.

ERRATA.

Page 35 line 15. read the great Mystery of Godliness, manifested in the Fle-
sh. 1 Tim. 3. 16. p. 4. l. 1. r. Simon; nor. l. 2. nor. l. 8. openly. p. 5. l. 21.
Sensatensis. p. 19. l. 1. r. τελευτα. l. 1b. Trithem. p. 23. l. 20. r. μυστα-
ριον. l. 12. r. αληθειαν. l. 22. r. αληθως. l. 35. r. Αληθινον. l. 36. r. Αληθινον. p. 37. l. 18.
Idem. p. 40. l. 24. r. Hactenus. p. 41. l. 24. r. Improper. p. 43. l. 4. r. The
Hases. p. 47. l. 3. r. Carthus. p. 49. l. 27. r. speak.

and the Use of Language in Writings, for accord-
ing to these most unreasonable Measures of Expound-
ing the *Cratolian* Catechism, as the Summary of the
Athanasian Faith, and the *Athanasian* Creed, the Epi-
tome of *Socinianism*.

Space the printed Contradictions exactly with the
same again with all the former; and if it was a Proof
would only prove impossible for an Human Na-
ture to be in Hypothetical Union with an Infinite Epi-
curan God; for we have from what I maintain they
draw a false Contradiction they charge the Trinity
and incarnation withal; his Opinion of Two Wills
is not disputed; for if Two Substances, as has appear-
ed, may have One Substance, Two Wills may; and

then there is but One Person; for the Substance of the
Person consists not in the Objects of the Will, but in
the Unity of the Existence. I must now leave the
Readers (they have their Liberty) to make their own
use of the above.

FINIS.